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Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, IT

SUBJECT: GOI THREAT TO PAN AM FLIGHTS BEYOND ROME

REF: ROME 14710

1. IT IS OUR INTENTION THAT CAPACITY FREEZE BE APPLIED AS FOLLOWS: DURING 1978 SUMMER SEASON (APRIL 1-SEPTEMBER 30), PAN AM MAY NOT ON ITS SERVICES BEYOND ROME BOARD AND DEBOARD AT ROME MORE THAN 77,040 PASSENGERS. THIS FIGURE IS CALCULATED BY MULTIPLYING 214 DAYS BY 180 SEATS BY 2.

2. PAN AM REPORTS THAT THROUGH JULY IT HAS BOARDED AND DEBOARDED 20,185 SUCH PASSENGERS AT ROME, WHICH IS 25.2 PER-CENT OF ITS TOTAL SEASONAL LIMIT. ITS CURRENT BOOKINGS BETWEEN AUGUST 14 AND SEPTEMBER 30 ARE ABOUT 11,000. THUS, THERE APPEARS TO BE NO QUESTION BUT THAT PAN AM WILL BE WELL WITHIN 77,040 LIMIT THROUGH END OF SEASON. IN FACT,
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ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT HAVE ACTUAL COUNT OF NUMBER OF TRANSIT PASSENGERS SO FAR CARRIED, IT APPEARS PAN AM WILL BE WITHIN 77,040 LIMIT EVEN IF TRANSIT PASSENGERS WERE INCLUDED.

3. FOREGOING POINTS OUT THAT IT IS ITALIAN FLIGHT-BY-FLIGHT RESTRICTION, NOT INCLUSION OF TRANSITS, WHICH WOULD

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PLACE PAN AM IN JEOPARDY IF WE ACCEPTED ITALIAN POSITION. HOWEVER, COMBINATION OF TWO RESTRICTIONS WOULD HAVE SERIOUS IMPACT. BASED ON CURRENT BOOKINGS, ACCEPTANCE OF ITALIAN POSITION WOULD AFFECT 17 EASTBOUND FLIGHTS THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30. IF FLIGHT-BY-FLIGHT RESTRICTION APPLIED, BUT FREEZE APPLIED ONLY TO BOARDING TRAFFIC, NINE FLIGHTS WOULD BE AFFECTED. IMPACT ON WESTBOUND FLIGHTS WOULD BE EVEN MORE SERIOUS.

4. OTHER TWO METHODS OF APPLYING FREEZE SUGGESTED PARA 6 REFTEL ARE INCORRECT. IT IS MISTAKE AS EMBASSY POINTS OUT, TO CALCULATE OVERALL LIMIT BY MULTIPLYING NUMBER DAYS BY ROUNDTRIP SEATS (180); CORRECT METHOD IS TO USE ONE-WAY SEATS (360). OTHER METHOD OF SUBTRACTING NUMBER OF TRANSITS CARRIED IN 1977 MAY SEEM LOGICAL IN ORDER TO AVOID COMPARING APPLES AND ORANGES, BUT IT OVERLOOKS FACT THAT US COULD HAVE CLAIMED THERE SHOULD BE NO SEAT LIMITATION THIS YEAR BASED ON FACT PAN AM PLANNED TO USE 747 LAST SUMMER. IN OTHER WORDS, SINCE WE HAVE AGREED NOT TO COMPARE SCHEDULES FILED THIS SUMMER WITH SCHEDULES FILED LAST SUMMER, BUT TO COMPARE SCHEDULES FILED THIS SUMMER WITH SCHEDULES OPERATED LAST YEAR (THAT IS, TO COMPARE UNLIKE THINGS), WE FEEL JUSTIFIED IN COMPARING NUMBER OF SEATS USED FOR LOCAL TRAFFIC WITH NUMBER OF SEATS AVAILABLE ON 707 LAST SUMMER FOR BOTH LOCAL AND TRANSIT TRAFFIC.
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5. DEPT AGREES IT WOULD BE GOOD IDEA ASK PIETROSANTO FOR BASIS HIS 50 PERCENT FIGURE. HOWEVER, WE SUGGEST IT MAY BE BETTER PART OF VALOR TO AVOID DEBATE ON METHODOLOGY FOR TIME BEING UNTIL WE HAVE BETTER APPRECIATION ITALY'S GAME PLAN.

6. WE HAVE JUST BEEN ADVISED BY PAN AM THAT CIVILAVIA HAS GRANTED IT 15 DAY REPRIEVE. VANCE

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